

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

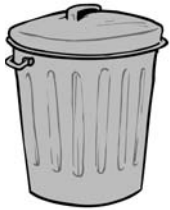
Hurricane Katrina Information

Water

During this crisis, drink only bottled water from a reliable source until water supplies are repaired and declared safe.



Food



Throw away any food which came in contact with flood water, including canned foods that are bulging, opened or damaged and any food in containers with screw-caps, snap lids, twist caps, flip tops, and crimped cap (soda pop bottles). Throw away food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture. Throw away perishable foods (including meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40 degrees Fahrenheit (F) for 2 hours or more. These could all be contaminated and cause serious illness if consumed.

Injuries

If you have wounds, you should be evaluated for a tetanus immunization, just as you would at any other time of injury. If you receive a puncture wound, have a doctor or health care worker determine whether a tetanus booster is necessary.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is poisonous to breathe. During flood cleanup, all gasoline-powered devices such as pumps, generators, and pressure washers should only be operated outside where there is good ventilation. This will help to ensure your safety from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Snakes, Insects, and Other Animals

Bees, wasps, fire ants, snakes and other animals have lost their homes and may be very dangerous. Avoid contact with these animals as much as possible. Be cautious in moving items where animals could be hiding. Avoid touching dead animals.

Preventing West Nile Virus (WNV)



After a hurricane, mosquitoes may breed in standing water. The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites:

- If available, use insect repellents containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) or Picaridin.
- Mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. If possible, wear long sleeves and pants at these times.

Prevent Injury after a Hurricane

People in the areas affected by a hurricane will face hazards associated with cleanup activities. To prevent injury:

- ★ NEVER handle or work near a downed power line.
- ★ If you must work in flooded areas, the use of hard hats, goggles, heavy work gloves, work boots, or other protective gear will reduce the risk of injury.
- ★ When water has been present anywhere near electrical circuits, turn off the power at the main breaker or fuse on the service panel.
- ★ Never enter flooded areas or touch electrical equipment if the ground is wet, unless you are certain that the power is off.
- ★ When using gasoline and diesel generators to supply power to a building, switch the main breaker or fuse on the service panel to the “off” position prior to starting the generator.

Be Aware of Structural Instability



Buildings that have been submerged or have withstood rushing flood waters may have sustained hidden structural damage and could be dangerous or unstable.

- Be aware that flood-damaged buildings may collapse.
- Assume all stairs, floors, and roofs are unsafe.
- Leave immediately if unusual noises signal a possible collapse.

Avoid Hazardous Materials

Flood waters can dislodge tanks, drums, pipes, and equipment.

- Do not attempt to move unidentified containers because they may contain hazardous materials such as pesticides or propane.
- If you come in contact with pesticides or other hazardous chemicals, thoroughly wash exposed skin areas with water immediately.

Reduce Risk of Heat-Related Illness

While cleaning up after the hurricane, reduce heat-related risks by resting frequently and:

- Drinking a glass of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes, if possible.
- Wearing light-colored, loose-fitting clothing if available.
- Working during the cooler hours of the day.

Prevent Fatigue-Related Injuries

Continued long hours of work, combined with exhaustion, can create a highly stressful situation during cleanup. People working on hurricane and flood cleanup can reduce their risks of injury and illness in several ways:

- Set priorities for cleanup tasks and pace the work. Avoid physical exhaustion.
- Resume a normal sleep schedule as quickly as possible.
- Be alert to emotional exhaustion or strain. Consult family members, friends or professionals for emotional support.

Who do I contact for additional information?

For more information on hurricane preparedness and safety, the public can call the **Mississippi Department of Health at 1-866-HLTHY4U (1-866-458-4948)** or visit www.HealthyMS.com.